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Family Values submits morals proposal

By Wendy Y. Lawton
Gazette Telegraph

Colorado for Family Values has expanded on its sexual morality proposal for District 11 and formally submitted the policy to the D-11 school board.

For weeks, the school board has been receiving CFV-printed postcards calling for a district-wide rule pushing abstinence and traditional marriage and discouraging promiscuity.

Now, CFV is following up the postcards with a policy draft to District 11 board members.

The four-paragraph proposal states that students must be taught the "deleterious effects of experimental and promiscuous sexual activity" in areas of "curriculum, instruction, and student environment involving issues of sex education, health, inter-personal relationships and any other areas of sexual content." The draft also states students must be taught the benefits of abstinence.

According to district guidelines, all this already happens in the classroom. Students learn about AIDS and sexually transmitted diseases in health class; They are told abstinence is the most effective way to prevent them.

What would be new for D-11 is the focus on traditional marriage, which CFV chairman Will Perkins has defined as a union between a man and a woman. Under the proposal, students would be taught the "benefits" of this kind of marriage in preventing teen pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.

Right now, the district doesn't define traditional marriage as a heterosexual union — although it is clearly implied in health class, said Bev Tarpley, director of instruction for D-11.

"It's taken for granted that when you're talking about a marriage, it's between a man and woman, but we don't come out and put in on the chalkboard," Tarpley said.

And while there are lessons on the importance of two-parent families, there are none that promote heterosexual marriage over homosexual marriage. Tarpley said that would send the wrong message to those students whose parents are gay.

"We want to be real careful," she said. "We don't want to denigrate those kids or say to them 'you don't count.' "

What's next to be decided is whether the school board will even take up the proposal.

Board Vice President Sherry Butcher said an answer may not come soon.

She said the board must get moving on how to spend $99.8 million in bond money for new schools and renovations. Plus, she said, board members are still getting feedback on the sex policy.

Some is coming from CFV's postcard campaign. So far, 1,760 postcards urging the board to pass the policy have been received. CFV said it has printed 130,000 cards.

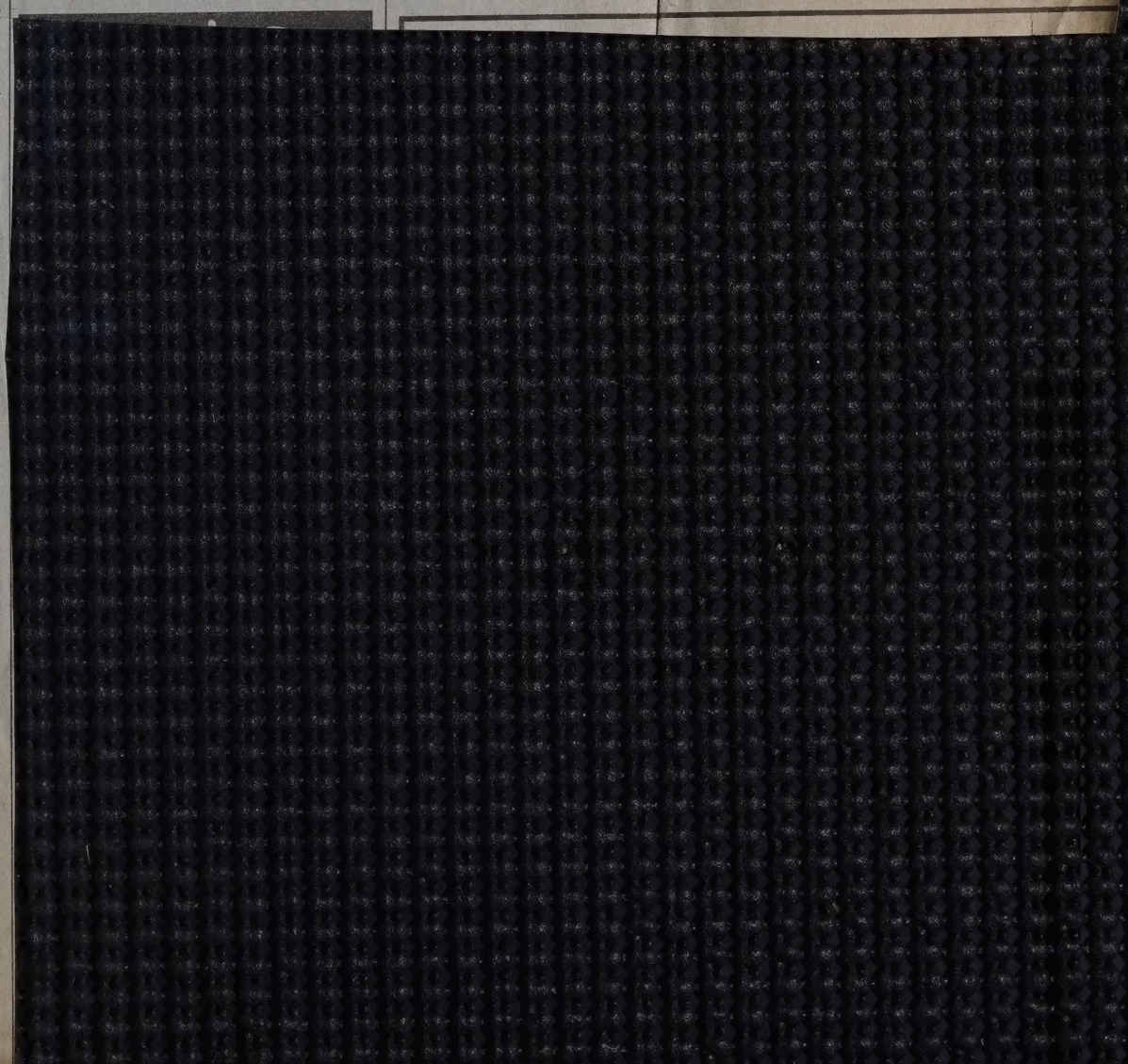
A statement supporting the policy has also been sent by CFV to the El Paso County legislative delegation, which will then be forwarded to the board.

Rep. Doug Dean, R-Colorado Springs, said he circulated and signed the letter because he'd like to see local school districts teach pure abstinence, with no discussion of birth control.

"Our current sex education policies say sex is dangerous, but here's how to use a condom," Dean said. "That's a subject that should be left alone."

Rep. Marcy Morrison, R-Manitou Springs, didn't sign. While Morrison said she supports teaching abstinence, the former Manitou school board member didn't feel comfortable as a state politician telling a local school board what to do.

"We have better things to do than get involved in local school board policy," Morrison said. "Why don't we just mind our own business? Why are we getting in the middle of this?"



HES
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POLITICS

Colorado man elected to head GOP

Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Colorado developer Jim Nicholson, a soft-spoken conservative who served as an Army Ranger in Vietnam, was elected Republican National Committee chairman Friday after an often acrimonious battle that took six ballots to settle.

Nicholson's victory gave Colorado an unusual niche in national politics: Colorado Gov. Roy Romer is President Clinton's choice to serve as general chairman of the Democratic National Committee.

The 58-year-old Nicholson spent roughly $160,000 to defeat the two early front-runners in the race: former New Hampshire Gov. Steve Merrill and David Norcross of New Jersey, a veteran committee member and

The new chairman undoubtedly will find himself thrust immediately into the role of defending Speaker Newt Gingrich, who was fined and reprimanded Friday for ethics violations.

Erasing a $10 million party debt also is an immediate priority, as well as assisting GOP candidates in this year's races for governor in New Jersey and Virginia.

But the major test comes in the 1998 midterms, when the party will try to hold its congressional majorities and also defend in two-thirds of the 36 races for governor.

Nicholson, an Iowa native, is a West Point graduate. After serving in Vietnam, he graduated from Columbia Law School

Nicholson has served on the Republican National Committee for 10 years and was a vice chairman representing Western states.

Nicholson ran third on the first three ballots but then vaulted into first on the fourth after Texas GOP Chairman Tom Pauken and Michigan conservative activist Chuck Yob withdrew and endorsed Nicholson. California GOP chairman John Herrington endorsed Nicholson after the fourth ballot, leaving a three-man race.

On the fifth, Nicholson had 74 votes to 47 for Norcross and 43 for Merrill. Norcross then threw his support to Nicholson, and Merrill quickly followed suit, allowing Nicholson to be elected by acclamation on the sixth ballot.

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